PHŒNIX PARK.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 5 June 1862;—*for*,

COPY "of any CORRESPONDENCE which has taken place between the Irish Government, the Treasury, and the Board of Works, respecting the Improvement of the PHŒNIX PARK."

Whitehall, Treasury Chambers, 25 June 1862. } F. PEEL.

COPY of CORRESPONDENCE which has taken place between the Irish Government, the Treasury, and the Board of Works, respecting the Improvement of the PHŒNIX PARK.

Sir *T. A. Larcom*, to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Sir, Dublin Castle, 6 June 1861.

I AM directed by the Lord Lieutenant to transmit to you, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, a memorial upon the subject of the improvement of the Phœnix Park, which has been presented to his Excellency by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and a deputation from the persons whose signatures are appended to the memorial. It will be observed that the signatures comprise the names of the most distinguished residents in Dublin and its neighbourhood, and there is no doubt that acquiescence in its prayer would be very gratifying to the public generally, and very beneficial to the health of the people.

I am therefore to request the subject may receive the most favourable consideration of their Lordships.

His Excellency desires me to suggest that the matter be placed in the hands of the Commissioners of Public Works, with instructions to procure a report from some competent person, with a plan to be gradually carried into effect.

It is believed that a small sum voted annually in the estimates of that Board, and disbursed under their directions gradually and systematically, would render the Phœnix Park one of the most beautiful in the United Kingdom, and it cannot be denied that it is at present in a retrograde condition.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Thos. A. Larcom.*

To his Excellency *George William Frederick* Earl of *Carlisle*, K. G., Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland.

My Lord,

WE have to request your Excellency's attention to the fact that the Phœnix Park is the only park or pleasure ground unrestrictedly open to the inhabitants of Dublin, whereas most of the capitals of Europe have many. That within the last 20 years the governing body of almost every large town, either in the United Kingdom or on the Continent, has exerted itself to create or improve pleasure grounds for the health, happiness, and civilization of all classes of the community.

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An obscure French or German town has gardens, fountains, and walks, where all classes meet, and which lead to facility of intercourse and self-respect, and propriety of manner and dress, not always to be found on the part of the poor in the United Kingdom.

It is hardly too much to assert that the attention thus devoted to the enjoyment of the people proves an accurate test of the social progress of the nation, and especially of the relation which exists between the governing body and the people at large. The Phœnix Park is the largest public park in the United Kingdom, and its area somewhat exceeds that of all the London parks united.

About the year 1840 considerable improvements were effected in the Park, which have largely added to its healthiness and usefulness. They were, however, abruptly stopped in the year 1847, and have unfortunately not been resumed. It is to be regretted that these improvements had not then been extended to planting timber trees in the more remote parts of the park, to the embellishing and making more ornamental the entrance of the park nearest to the town, so as to give pleasing walks, with flowering shrubs, so much enjoyed at Kensington Gardens, or the Victoria Park, or even to the perfect drainage of the park. It is believed that the plan, which evinced considerable taste and judgment, has not been lost, and we have to suggest that it be gradually carried out, and the estimates moderately enlarged for the purpose to such extent as may be consistent with other demands on the public expenditure.

We annex a tabular statement, showing the expenditure for each of the last 10 years in London and Dublin, showing what has been done in London latterly, and how much increased attention has been devoted to the object.

We address your Excellency with the greater confidence, knowing, from experience, the interest your Lordship has always taken in plans having for their object the happiness of the Irish people.

EXPENDITURE ON ROYAL PARKS AND PLEASURE GARDENS.

NAMES of PARKS, &c.	YEARS.										TOTAL.
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1856.	1857.	1858.	1859.	1860.	
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
1. Battersea Park - - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	8,070	8,314	8,434	9,829	84,447
2. Bushy Park - - - -	–	1,820	2,004	1,967	1,885	3,132	2,832	3,050	2,774	2,750	22,314
3. Chelsea Hospital, Grounds, &c.	800	840	638	759	754	750	757	3,091	2,194	2,188	12,371
4. Greenwich Park - - -	880	2,275	1,874	2,234	1,828	2,717	2,430	2,503	2,241	3,160	21,940
5. Hampton Court Pleasure Grounds and Roads.	1,781	3,984	3,988	3,859	3,730	4,208	4,321	4,308	4,392	4,282	32,844
6. Kennington Park - - -	–	–	–	754	1,647	1,574	1,673	1,727	1,337	1,747	10,459
7. Kensington Gardens - -	1,382	2,098	2,336	2,281	2,903	2,718	4,050	5,778	4,065	4,559	32,168
8. Kew Botanic Gardens and Pleasure Grounds.	5,583	12,217	9,742	11,003	15,114	19,079	15,494	15,244	25,840	15,753	145,069
9. Regent's Park - - -	5,097	5,025	7,289	8,249	5,504	6,601	8,893	6,813	7,746	7,832	69,849
10. Richmond Park - - -	–	4,710	4,845	5,247	4,752	7,849	7,916	8,228	8,162	8,326	80,033
10. Richmond and Kew Roads -	850	1,157	1,003	1,193	990	1,103	1,888	1,303	1,345	1,435	12,070
11. 12. 13. St. James', Green, and Hyde Parks and Roads.	15,456	15,838	15,648	17,849	20,262	27,136	42,102	25,491	41,260	26,542	247,052
14 Victoria Park - - -	2,442	2,409	2,168	3,370	2,281	4,660	6,357	8,060	5,922	5,159	41,028
TOTAL, England - - -	34,071	55,173	51,334	56,268	61,748	81,720	106,583	91,903	115,682	93,162	747,644
Phœnix Park, Ireland - - -	3,812	3,820	3,957	4,507	4,909	4,570	4,233	4,299	5,328	4,525	43,955

(signed) *Richard Athinson*, Lord Mayor.
Richard Dublin.
+ *Paul Cullen*, Archbishop, etc.
Richard Barton, Rector of St. George's.
Charles Davis, M. D., Member of the Royal Irish Academy.
Francis Blackburn, Lord Justice of Appeal.
Richard MacDonnell, Provost of T.C.D.
Chas. Wm. Wall, Vice-Provost, T. C. D.
J. H. Todd, Senior Fellow, Trinity College,
and 605 other signatures.

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The Commissioners of Public Works to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Office of Public Works, Dublin,
18 December 1861.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, that the Board have delayed answering the reference from their Lordships of the memorial presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and others, pointing out the necessity for completing the improvements in the Phœnix Park, commenced under the Commissioners of Works in London, until they had a plan prepared, showing where additional plantations were required, with an estimate of the probable cost of fencing and planting, &c.

They now submit such a plan, on which are marked by "red colour," all proposed plantations, which, if carried out, would improve greatly the appearance of the park.

For many years the renewals have not been adequate to the loss of old trees by storms, and in the remote parts of the park, that is, extending from the powder magazine by the Military School, to the Knockmaroon Gate, the park may be considered bare, there being few plantations except near the boundary walls.

The Board in preparing this plan have been guided in a great measure by the opinion of Mr. Wilkie, who is and has been for many years in charge of the park, and who was employed in laying out and planting, executed under the Commissioners of Works in London, and who has given the subject much consideration.

A greater extent of planting near the Hibernian Military School than that proposed, would be desirable, but the necessity for reserving a large space for military manœuvring prevents this being done.

The Board propose to alter the base and enclosing railings of the phœnix, the present arrangement being very inconvenient.

It is difficult to estimate the total probable cost of the work, but they are of opinion that a sum of 15,000 *l.* expended gradually on these improvements, including additional works of drainage, which are indispensably required, would be sufficient for all purposes.

The memorialists refer to improvements contemplated by the late Commissioners at the entrances, but the Board do not find any reference among their reports to plans prepared for the purpose, although the subject is alluded to in a report to them by their architect. Great improvements could be effected by erecting new entrance gates and lodges in a position further from the town, at a moderate expense; but on submitting the general plans for all these improvements to the Chief Secretary, he did not consider it advisable at present to enter on the question, and instructed the Board to submit for their Lordships' sanction the propriety of taking in the Board's estimates a sum of 3,000 *l.* for draining, planting, &c., on account of the whole estimate of 15,000 *l.*

The letter and memorial referred to, are herewith returned.

I have, &c.
(signed) *E. Hornsby*, Secretary.

The Secretary of the Treasury to the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland.

Gentlemen,

Treasury Chambers, 19 February 1862.

I AM commanded by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you that, before giving further consideration to your letter of 18th December last, in which you submit that a vote for 3,000 *l.* should be proposed in the Estimates for the ensuing year (in part of 15,000 *l.*), for draining and improving the Phœnix Park, my Lords are desirous of information on the following points:—

1st. It appears that the sum voted by Parliament in the year 1861–2, under the head of "Phœnix Park," was 4,654 *l.*, of which 2,989 *l.* was for maintenance, including roads, plantations, drains, &c., and there is a further sum of 3,604 *l.* for

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for the repairs and alterations in the vice-regal and other lodges, demesnes, and plantations.

On referring to the Estimates of former years, the aggregate amounts appear nearly the same, and my Lords may infer that the appropriation was somewhat in the same proportion.

The sum of 3,000 *l.* a year being, therefore, apparently applicable to improvement and maintenance of the Phœnix Park, not including the portion of it occupied by the demesnes of the Lord Lieutenant and principal officers, my Lords would have supposed that it would have afforded sufficient means for draining and replanting, as well as ordinary maintenance, and they would be glad to have a further report from you with regard to the application of that amount.

2d. My Lords desire to know whether the sum of 3,100 *l.* proposed in the Estimates for the ensuing year, comprises the improvements suggested in your letter of 18th December last, or whether in that letter it was your intention that an additional sum of 3,000 *l.* should be inserted in those Estimates.

I am, &c.
(signed) *F. Peel.*

The Commissioners of Public Works to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Office of Public Works, Dublin,
22 February 1862.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 19th instant, referring to the Board's letter of 18th December last, in which they submitted that a vote for 3,000 *l.* should be proposed in the Estimates for the ensuing year (in part of 15,000 *l.*), for draining and improving the Phœnix Park,

I am directed to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, that the sum voted last year for the Phœnix Park, viz., 4,654 *l.*, did not include any sum for general improvements in the park, nor have the Board included in their Estimates for 1862–63 any sum on account of those improvements estimated at 15,000 *l.*, not having received their Lordships' sanction to do so.

The sums heretofore voted annually have been barely sufficient for the purpose of maintenance, and have been so restricted that the renewal of trees, lost by decay or storm, has not been provided for.

Their Lordships will be able to judge of the necessity for a large expenditure in works of maintenance, when the Board state that the Park contains within its walls 1,752 statute acres, 90 acres of plantations, about 15 miles of roads, and about 13 miles of fences, principally rough paling. The enclosure walls are about seven miles in extent. In addition to the foregoing, the maintenance of 13 residences for bailiff, keepers, and constables is included in the Estimates.

I have, &c.
(signed) *E. Hornsby*, Secretary.

The Secretary of the Treasury to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Treasury Chambers,
30 April 1862.

Sir,

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you, for the information of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, that they have given full consideration to the memorial regarding the state of the Phœnix Park, signed by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and a very numerous and respectable portion of the citizens of Dublin, which accompanied General Larcom's letter of 6 June last.

My Lords readily admit that it is reasonable and proper that the Phœnix Park, in common with the royal parks in this country and Scotland, should be suitably maintained; and if upon further inquiry and consideration, the funds voted by Parliament

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Parliament for its maintenance shall prove inadequate, my Lords will be prepared to consider the expediency of submitting an additional vote for the purpose.

My Lords, however, have to observe that the expenditure upon the Phœnix Park has been considerable; that little more than a year has elapsed since it was transferred to the Board of Works, Ireland, and that as yet no sufficiently detailed plans or estimates have been furnished to this Board to enable my Lords to arrive at a satisfactory judgment as to the improvements which are requisite, and the cost of them.

Their Lordships propose before next year to cause a detailed survey and examination to be made of the park by the Commissioners of Public Works, and obtain such a report as to its condition as will enable their Lordships to give fitting consideration to the memorial referred to.

I am, &c.
(signed) *F. Peel.*

The Under Secretary to the Commissioners of Public Works.

Gentlemen, Dublin Castle, 7 May 1862.

I AM directed by the Lord Lieutenant to transmit, for your information, copy of a letter from the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, relative to the state of the Phœnix Park, and I am to request that you will report, at your earliest convenience, whether you consider that the funds voted by Parliament will be sufficient for its maintenance, and if not, whether it would be expedient to request their Lordships to submit to Parliament an additional Vote for the purpose.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Thos. A. Larcom.*

The Commissioners of Public Works to the Under Secretary.

Office of Public Works, Dublin,
Sir, 10 May 1862.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, transmitting copy of a letter from the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, relative to the state of the Phœnix Park.

And in reply, I am directed to send herewith, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the enclosed copies of Treasury letter, dated 19th February last, and of the Board's reply thereto.

I am directed to observe, that the sum voted in the Estimates this year is considered just sufficient for maintenance, leaving no sum available for improvements.

I have, &c.
Sir Thomas Larcom, K.C.B. (signed) *E. Hornsby*, Secretary.

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PHŒNIX PARK.

COPY of CORRESPONDENCE which has taken place between the *Irish* Government, the Treasury, and the Board of Works, respecting the Improvement of the PHŒNIX PARK.

(*Mr. Vance.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
27 *June* 1862.

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Under 1 *oz.*

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